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DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG, IO/PSC
NSC FOR BPITTMAN AND HUDSON
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ABYEI ADMINISTRATION TAKING SHAPE, SLOWLY

REFS: A. KHARTOUM 1293 B. KHARTOUM 1351

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Elements of the new Abyei Administration, notably on the security side, are taking shape, but Abyei Roadmap implementation remains constrained by the lack of a functioning civil administration. The local government should begin receiving oil revenues (calculated by the Finance Ministry to now total around US\$17 million) when the administration starts to operate. END SUMMARY.

Components of Abyei Administration Falling Into Place

¶2. (SBU) On September 10, new UNMIS Political Affairs Chief Muin Shrim told emboffs that the elements of the new Abyei Administration are gradually falling into place, although more needs to be done, and quickly. According to Shrim, SAF and SPLA have completed their mutual withdrawals from the Abyei region, with the exception of an SAF unit located at Difra, an oil-field site, for security. This unit should be able to depart as soon as the new Abyei Joint Integrated Unit (JIU) becomes fully operational and is capable of providing oilfield security. He described the JIU as functional. (Note: Although the Abyei JIU now is fully manned and is reported to have coalesced into a cohesive unit, it continues to be critically short of the equipment required to be able to perform its security role, especially transport (ref. A). End note.)

¶3. (SBU) Shrim reported that the Joint Integrated Police Unit (JIPU) has now completed the training program provided by UNMIS, but still lacks infrastructure (e.g., police stations, vehicles) and equipment. He said the SPLM component of the JIPU also is under-strength and that recruiting in the south is lagging. The biggest challenge facing the JIPU, however, is the lack of an Abyei civil administration, putting judiciary responsibilities on the JIPU that a police force should not have to shoulder.

Civil Administration Needed ASAP

¶4. (SBU) Shrim said that the critical need now is for the new civil administration to start operating as soon as possible. Although Abyei Administrator Arop Mayak and Deputy Rahama al-Nour have been appointed (ref. B), the district still lacks a Council and administrative Directors. Shrim understood that although Mayak and al-Nour have submitted a list of candidates for these posts to the Presidency, they have yet to be confirmed. (The Presidency is meeting on September 14 to discuss this and other matters).

¶5. (SBU) Shrim said that Administrator Arop Mayak had been in Abyei the previous day, accompanied by an armed body guard of eight. Shrim said that UNMIS had warned Mayak that such a show of armed forces was inappropriate and could further inflame tensions in the region. (Note. The situation in Abyei began to deteriorate in the spring, when the SPLM's unilaterally appointed administrator Edward Lino arrived in town with a "bodyguard" of about 100 heavily armed SPLA troops, provoking (or providing a excuse) the SAF to reinforce

its presence in the area. End note.)

Oil-Revenue Transfers Await Civil Administration

16. (SBU) On September 7, Norwegian Embassy oil advisor Anders Hannevik told econoff that the Ministry of Finance has calculated the amount of oil revenues due to the Abyei Administration under the terms of Abyei Roadmap agreement. Hannevik said that the MinFin is calculating the transfers from the date of the agreement, June 8, amounting now to approximately US\$17 million. Hannevik did not know whether any funds had actually been transferred. Shrim also was unaware of any revenues having been deposited, but doubted that this would happen until the civil administration is in place. He remarked that this is another reason why the civil administration needs to be put in place quickly.

Comment

17. (SBU) Shrim recently took up his new position of UNMIS Pol Chief, after serving as JMST political chief. He is still very much learning his new portfolio. His relatively upbeat assessment of Abyei administration progress is good news. However, as he notes, the critical need now is for the functioning civil administration that Abyei has lacked for three years. It remains to be seen whether the Presidency can resist playing politics with Mayak's slate of appointments and approves the body of his administration quickly and whether urgently needed equipment can be provided - and allowed by Khartoum - for the JIU and JIPU.

FERNANDEZ